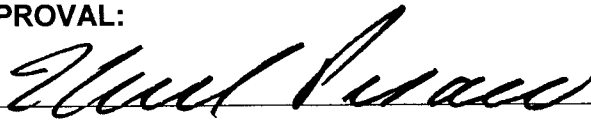


REPORT

TO: Community, Economic and Human Development Committee (CEHD)
FROM: Jacob Lieb, Acting Lead Regional Planner, (213) 236-1921, lieb@scag.ca.gov
SUBJECT: Regional Comprehensive Plan Concepts and Approach
DATE: September 2, 2004

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Recommend that the Regional Council approve proposed concepts and approaches for the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the approval of the SCAG Strategic Plan on October 3, 2002, as well as the approval of the Compass Growth Vision on June 3, 2004, the Regional Council has directed the creation of a new Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). The purpose of this RCP is to serve as a tool for implementing regional policies and programs, in particular the Regional Transportation Plan, its associated Program Environmental Impact Report, and the Compass Growth Vision. The RCP consolidates and translates programs and policies of SCAG in order to facilitate and promote external, independent actions. The Fiscal Year 04-05 Work Plan calls for SCAG to take all steps necessary to complete a draft plan. Review and adoption of a final RCP is planned for Fiscal Year 05-06.

SCAG staff has taken several steps in preparation for the RCP update, including

1. Creating a preliminary concept paper,
2. Creating a draft plan outline,
3. Creating a draft outreach plan, and
4. Compiling a preliminary catalogue of standing SCAG policies.

These preliminary products are attached. Taken as a whole, they lay out the concepts and approaches that staff proposes to use for the completion of the Comprehensive Plan. There are several issues of note for Committee consideration, which are discussed briefly below.

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REPORT

Foremost, the plan process is intended to compile existing policies and to set out practical implementation options. As such, staff does not envision extensive new policy making deliberations for the RCP.

For the development of the plan SCAG envisions a public outreach effort that is targeted to stakeholder audiences. The specific purpose of such outreach is to determine the best structure for action plans and implementation options for the target audience (primarily local governments, transportation agencies, and other government entities). Through this outreach effort, however, new policy options may emerge, particularly in areas outside SCAG's core transportation, land use, and housing topics.

The recently adopted Compass Growth Vision will serve as the central theme of the RCP. The plan will contain a discussion of the vision and the potential implications for the plan's audience. Further, each topic chapter will contain a discussion on applicable Growth Principles (Mobility, Prosperity, Livability, Sustainability).

As the policy committee which has purview over the Growth Vision, and comprehensive planning generally, the CEHD Committee will guide the overall effort for the RCP. However, chapter and topic issues that clearly pertain to environmental and transportation issues will be decided by the Energy and Environment Committee and the Transportation and Communication Committee respectively. All three committees will receive regular progress updates.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Concept Paper
- Outreach Plan
- Preliminary Outline
- Preliminary Policy Catalogue

FISCAL IMPACT:

Preparation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan is included in the SCAG Overall Work Program for Fiscal Year 2004-2005 (wbs 05-035).

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**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
2004-2005 REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CONCEPT AND PRELIMINARY WORK PLAN**

Purpose:

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) promotes policy objectives of the Regional Council, fulfills and implements the new organizational Strategic Plan, and serves to assist outside parties in implementing regional plans. As such, the Regional Comprehensive Plan is an extension of SCAG's other, on-going planning efforts, notably, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) along with the RTP Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), Regional Transportation Improvement Plan, and Southern California COMPASS. The RCP serves to consolidate and translate those efforts to promote external, independent action.

Features of the Plan

- **Comprehensive:**
The RCP, as noted above, is primarily intended as a guide for local governments and other external entities in interpreting and implementing other regional plans and policy objectives. As such, it focuses on areas of SCAG responsibility as defined by Federal and State law, including transportation planning, air quality, housing, and growth. A chapter is dedicated to each of these areas. However, in recognition of the inter-connected-ness of planning disciplines, and with an eye toward outcomes, the RCP treats all issues related to the region's overall well-being. As such, chapters are dedicated to such issues as the economy, resource management as well as other (tbd).
- **Action Oriented**
The RCP will describe conditions and objectives around each issue. However, the major focus of each chapter will be on specific actions for specific identified stakeholders. The RCP will be the primary tool for implementing mitigation measures committed by SCAG in the RTP PEIR. Further, the RCP will create definitions and delineate thresholds for SCAG's Inter-Governmental Review efforts.
- **Advisory**
SCAG is a voluntary member organization comprised of local governments, and creates a forum with the ability to affect policy and practice of outside parties. As such, the RCP is intended to be an advisory document that clearly lays out steps that local governments and others can choose to take in support of regional objectives. The decision to pursue such objectives belongs solely to the independent actor. That said, SCAG will work proactively to demonstrate the benefits of pursuing the objectives identified in the plan.
- **Long Range**
The RCP is intended to work as a companion piece to other planning efforts around the region and state. Though the RCP is updated by SCAG periodically (approximately 3-5 years), the plan itself will discuss long term actions and outcomes for the region. At a minimum, the RCP will feature the same 25-year planning horizon featured in the RTP. At the same time, the plan will discuss shorter term goals and objectives analogous to the horizons in the RTIP.

- **Format**
As described above, and similar to previous RCP, the plan will contain a chapter each devoted to identified issue areas. These areas will include transportation, environment, growth/land-use, and housing (exact titles tbd). Other areas will be added based on future discussion. Each chapter will contain a like format which will include a description of a specific regional policy objective(s) current conditions, a discussion of potential approaches, and recommended actions/menu of options for specified stakeholders.

Preparation

- **Policy Guidance**
As noted above, the RCP serves to advance policy objectives as determined by the Regional Council and featured in other SCAG plans. Particularly of note, the Southern California Compass (Growth Visioning) project features several specific recommendations for local governments aimed at improving land-use and urban form in the region and building efficiencies in the transportation system. The 2005 RCP will contain special emphasis on local implementation actions that emerge from the Compass program.
- **Cooperative Approach**
As the RCP is intended to facilitate action by outside parties, the process for developing the plan must be open and participatory. The plan will be based around established Regional Council policies. In addition, SCAG proposes to involve local and other levels of government, private industry groups, residents and other stakeholders in the development of the plan. SCAG will utilize various on-going public outreach and involvement efforts to this end, but may also form a single purpose, ad-hoc advisory group for this purpose.
- **Timelines**
Drafting of some chapters, based on assignment in 2003-04 Work Programs, will proceed prior to July 2004. Otherwise, plan milestones and progress will be as follows:
 1. Policy Committee, public dialogue on policy objectives
July-Sept. 2004
 2. Regional Council sign-off on project plan, policy objectives
Sept. 2004
 3. Stakeholder participation process
Sept-Jan 2004
 4. Drafting
Jan-June. 2005
 5. Draft Review, Policy Committees and R.C.
June 2005
 6. Adoption
Summer or fall 2005

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PRELIMINARY OUTLINE
August 2004**

PLANNING SUBJECT AREA

Synopsis: The Regional Comprehensive Plan will bring together the diverse range of programs and plans developed by SCAG, and synthesize these within the strategic context of the recently adopted Compass Growth Vision. SCAG's purpose in preparing this document is to better connect regional-scale planning efforts with city, county, and independent actions. In order to best serve potential users, the Regional Comprehensive Plan will be organized into topical chapters focusing on specific planning areas. Where possible, these chapters will be consistent with and supportive of required local General Plan elements. For continuity, each chapter will have a similar format, and consistent sub-sections. In general, each chapter will have three broad components--an introductory portion describing prevailing conditions, policies and indicators; an analytic portion which draws out the reciprocal linkages between each planning area and the Compass Principles of Livability, Prosperity, Mobility, and Sustainability; and an action component which presents mandatory as well as recommended measures and best management practices. Through this organization, the RCP will strengthen the connectivity between the recently adopted Compass Growth Vision and each of SCAG's planning areas in a consistent and accessible manner.

As follows:

Introduction and Executive Summary

- i) Purpose of RCP
- ii) SCAG's broad policy goals
- iii) Use of the document

Introduction and Discussion of Compass Growth Vision as Major Theme

1) Transportation

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

2) Land Use

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions

*How indicators will be handled in the RCP requires more discussion. Likely, the RCP will simply record the results of other on-going efforts (Compass, Benchmarks Task Force, etc.)

**Best practices will be developed through advisory group deliberations and literature review.

- ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

3) Housing

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

4) Air Quality

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

5) Economy

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

6) Energy

- a) Background:

*How indicators will be handled in the RCP requires more discussion. Likely, the RCP will simply record the results of other on-going efforts (Compass, Benchmarks Task Force, etc.)

**Best practices will be developed through advisory group deliberations and literature review.

- i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

7) Water

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

8) Habitat and Open Space

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

9) Solid Waste

- a) Background:
 - i) Discussion, current conditions
 - ii) SCAG policies
 - iii) Measurement/Indicators*
- b) Analysis:
 - i) Responsiveness to principles
- c) Action:
 - i) Mandatory actions (EIR mitigations)
 - ii) Advisory
 - iii) Best Practices**

*How indicators will be handled in the RCP requires more discussion. Likely, the RCP will simply record the results of other on-going efforts (Compass, Benchmarks Task Force, etc.)

**Best practices will be developed through advisory group deliberations and literature review.

**SCAG
REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PRELIMINARY OUTREACH PROGRAM
JUNE 2004**

Background and Purpose

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) is an implementation tool for existing policies and programs of SCAG. Its purpose is to consolidate, translate, and interpret policies included in the 2004 RTP, the Growth Vision, and other plans and documents in order to promote independent actions of external parties. As such, the RCP development is not, on its own, a policy making exercise. This outreach plan reflects that premise.

Outreach is to be conducted during the course of preparation and adoption of the Regional Comprehensive Plan in order to assure that the document is useful for external parties and effective in reaching overall plan objectives. Further, the development of the RCP should be viewed as a member service and as an example of SCAG pursuing regional leadership in support of its mission and Strategic Plan.

Outreach specific to the RCP is to be limited in nature. While the plan will be developed in an open public process, the purpose of outreach is to collect input from specific stakeholders for specific issues. However, the RCP will be part of the larger outreach and public relations efforts of SCAG in general and the Compass program, in particular. In those settings, RCP-specific content will describe what the plan is, and how it fits in the context of SCAG programming. In particular, the RCP will be described as one of the implementation efforts of the Compass regional vision. Material of this type will likely consist of 2-3 slides to be incorporated into presentation on general SCAG or Compass topics.

Definition

Outreach and involvement for RCP is to be a dialogue and exchange of ideas between SCAG and stakeholders groups that will inform the development of the plan.

Stakeholders

Primary

Primary stakeholders are members of SCAG – local governments, sub-regions, and CTCs.

Secondary

Secondary stakeholders are other government entities – State, Fed. Special district

Tertiary

Tertiary stakeholders are private entities that are capable of affecting desired plan outcomes – e.g. developers

Proposed outreach options

- Ad-hoc standing task force/working group

A group composed mostly of primary stakeholders would meet approximately bi-monthly to discuss objectives, organization, and content of the plan. This group would be self-selected, its membership confirmed by the CEHD Committee, and would be advisory to the CEHD. It is hoped that this group will be formed primarily through discussion with the American Planning Association and Urban Land

Institute which are currently underway related to Compass implementation. The CEHD Committee will select its own representatives to this group.

- Topic Specific Groups

For topics outside of SCAG's core planning areas, including energy, habitat, waste, etc., staff will convene topic specific experts and interests in a workshop format. The purpose of these workshops will be to review the overall goals of SCAG and the RCP, to discuss policies held by other regional agencies, and to determine appropriate direction for action plans. At the determination of each topic specific groups, this process may be extended to a series of no more than 4 meetings each.

- Focus group

A focus group can be useful in refining the approach and content of the plan since it can involve people other than the regularly participating stakeholders. At one or two appropriate points in the development of the RCP, a focus group will be convened, including primary, secondary, and tertiary stakeholders, for the purpose of getting feedback on the usefulness of the RCP.

- Introductory outreach efforts

SCAG will undertake various efforts during the first half of FY04-05 to introduce the RCP effort and answer basic questions. These efforts will include presentations to the Regional Council, policy committees, Sub-Regional Coordinators, and subregions. Additionally, staff will prepare fact sheets and material for other SCAG presentations. These materials will emphasize the context in which the RCP fits (implementation tool for RTP, Compass), and familiarize the audience with the work program and schedule. The audience for this introductory effort is SCAG's regular business partners (RC, sub-regions, etc.)

- Periodic events

RCP events will be together or in close coordination with the Compass program. At a minimum, SCAG will hold a kickoff event for all of the region's City Managers and Planning Directors. The event will review SCAG policies contributing to the RCP and invite input on how to make the plan useful and effective in a local setting. This event will also help to populate the on-going task force. Additional events may be desirable when a draft plan is completed or near completion.

- Electronic communication

SCAG may wish to dedicate a web page to RCP development issues and updates. This would likely be best accomplished in coordination with the COMPASS program. Further, SCAG may use a list serve.

- Internal on-going public process

The direction of the RCP effort will be from the CEHD Committee, with advice from the Ad-hoc Task Force/Working Group. Issues related to specific topic areas (e.g. housing, air quality) will be under the purview of the appropriate policy committee. Regular updates will be provided to the policy committees for information. The RCP work effort describes milestones where RC action would be required. However, regular updates will also be provided.

- External on-going public process

SCAG will provide presentations on request for sub-regions and local governments (e.g. City Council meetings).

- Materials

The RCP effort will provide materials for use in on-going SCAG and Compass outreach programming. This will consist of slide presentations, fact sheets, and web content describing the purpose and intent of the RCP along with progress updates.

**SCAG
REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PRELIMINARY REGIONAL POLICY CATALOGUE**

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) will compile all current and applicable policies created by the Regional Council (RC). SCAG staff has conducted a review of current plans and RC actions upon which to build the RCP. This catalogue describes the different types of policies and how they will be treated in the creation of the plan.

CURRENT MAJOR PLANS

The principles, goals, policies, and strategies in current major plans will be included in the RCP.

1. The **2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** contains six specific goals, six priorities, and five guiding policies, as follows:

Goals

1. Maximize **mobility** and **accessibility** for all people and goods in the Region
2. Ensure travel **safety** and **reliability** for all people and goods in the Region
3. **Preserve** and ensure a **sustainable** regional transportation system
4. Maximize the **productivity** of our transportation system
5. Protect the **environment**, improve air quality and promote energy efficiency
6. Encourage **Land-use and growth patterns** that complement our transportation investments

Priorities

- The Region's vast investments in multi-modal transportation infrastructure must be protected.
- A maturing system dictates an increased operational focus that leverages technology to maximize the system's productivity.
- Air quality for the Region's residents must be improved and meet federal regulations.
- The investments in the RTP must address travel safety and modal balance; recognize the importance of providing safe travel choices; meet the needs of transit dependents and the goods movement community; and provide connections among the highway system, ports, and airports.
- For the first time, the RTP also integrates land-use policies as a means to influence transportation performance and the economy.
- The RTP must address all these priorities and more in the most cost-effective manner so that mobility and accessibility is maximized for people and goods.

Policies

1. Transportation investments shall be based on SCAG's adopted Regional Performance Indicators.

2. Ensuring safety, adequate maintenance, and efficiency of operations on the existing multi-modal transportation system will be RTP priorities and will be balanced against the need for system expansion investments.
3. RTP land use and growth strategies that differ from currently expected trends will require a collaborative implementation program that identifies required actions and policies by all affected agencies and subregions.
4. HOV gap closures that significantly increase transit and rideshare usage will be supported and encouraged, subject to Policy #1.
5. Progress monitoring on all aspects of the Plan, including timely implementation of projects, programs, and strategies, will be an important and integral component of the Plan.

The RTP also contains various measures and strategies used to implement these broader policies. These include a decentralized regional aviation strategy, increases in bus rapid transit among many others.

2. The **Compass Growth Vision** contains four Growth Principles, including:

- Mobility
- Prosperity
- Livability
- Sustainability

Further, the vision contains a number of measures and strategies intended to promote the principles. The vision also identifies growth opportunity areas, within which intensified land use is called for.

3. **2004 RTP Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)**

The PEIR contains 39 mitigation measures for which SCAG is the responsible party.

4. **2004 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP)**

The 2004 RTIP has not to date been adopted, but is scheduled for the September Regional Council meeting. Staff will review the RTIP for policy implications pending its adoption.

OTHER REGIONAL POLICIES

Staff has reviewed other sources of regional policies. In these areas, policies will be included in the Regional Comprehensive Plan based upon a staff determination that they are current and are broadly applicable across the region.

1. Regional Council Resolutions

Staff reviewed Regional Council Resolutions, but will not specifically consider them for the RCP because they either:

- a. are adopted along with major plans, and are therefore do not contain additional policy direction over and above the plans themselves, or
- b. are adopted for a single purpose that does not have an on-going regional application.

2. Legislative Positions

Each year, the Regional Council adopts a Legislative Program, which will be treated as policy and included in the RCP. Further, SCAG has positions on numerous pieces of State and Federal Legislation. To a large degree, these positions cannot be synthesized into cohesive regional policy. To the extent that SCAG's position on legislation relates to clearly established agency priorities such as Housing Element reform, they will be included in the RCP.

3. Ad-Hoc, Single Issue Policies

SCAG has established several policies by incorporated into stand-alone reports and task force work. These include but are not limited to water policies and transportation funding proposals.

4. 1996 Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG)

The 1996 contains policies largely based around the 1994 RTP. The 2005 RCP will replace the 1996 RCPG.